

## CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



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## GBA Annual General Meeting 2020

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The first remotely held AGM took place yesterday with over 30 member schools represented. Thank you to all who attended the meeting. We are delighted that members found the time to join during these challenging times.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Mr Terry McDaid, Chairperson of the GBA Executive Committee, for his input and dedication over the past years. Terry stood down from his role at the AGM and officially welcomed our new Chair, Mrs Jacqueline Weir MBE, and wished her well in her new role. Jacqueline has been a Governor in Belfast Royal Academy for almost 24 years and brings a plethora of skills and experience to her role as Chairperson. Jacqueline was awarded an MBE for services to the community in north Belfast in 2019.

Congratulations to our new Executive Committee members who were also officially elected at the AGM:

- Mr Ian Henderson, Bangor Grammar School
- Mr Vincent O'Connell, St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena
- Mr Leo O'Reilly, Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock

Attendees received a presentation on educational underachievement from Dermot Mullan who convened the GBA subgroup as well as a presentation on key issues relating to TNC management side from Ronnie Hassard.

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## Educational Underachievement - Evidence Session

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On the 18th of November, GBA attended a meeting with the Expert Panel on educational underachievement to provide evidence. The panel was announced by the Education Minister during summer 2020 (find out more [here](#)). The GBA was represented by Dermot Mullan (who convened the GBA subgroup), Dr Helen McNally and Paul McBride, Principal of St Malachy's College, Belfast. An evidence paper was submitted to the panel in advance of the meeting and was further discussed during proceedings. The paper is available on the GBA website.

We would like to thank GBA subgroup members as well as schools who contributed to the consultation.

As documented in the Panel's Terms of Reference, an interim report and draft

action plan is due for completion at the end of March 2021. A final action plan (including implementation costs and timescales) is expected at the end of May 2021. We wish the panel well with their consultation and look forward to seeing the reports next year.

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## Area Planning News

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Area Planning activity resumed after a six month hiatus as Department of Education and Education Authority staff were redeployed to support schools during the pandemic.

Area Planning Local Groups and the Area Planning Working Group all met in November with the Steering Group scheduled to take place on 30<sup>th</sup> November. Agenda items include a discussion of the SIB review report and school sustainability self- assessment. We will keep you updated with any developments.

If you would like to discuss plans for your area or for an initial discussion please contact [Nuala O'Neill](#).

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## Shared Education

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While Shared Education funding may be allocated, work is underway to identify further funding. The GBA will be compiling a list of schools not already involved who may wish to participate in future projects.

Please [get in touch](#) if you are interested or need any further information.

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## Education Restart Wellbeing Fund

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A £5million fund to help educational settings support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people was launched by the Department of Education last week.

The Minister said: "This is a significant investment which I know will be of benefit to pupils and staff alike. It can be used to provide emotional support, nurture, sporting and fun activities and after school clubs for young people. For staff, the funding can be used to support mindfulness, stress busting and other activities. In addition, educational settings will be able to work with other organisations or improve their physical environments"

Schools are currently awaiting guidance on how this funding might be used. If you have any feedback regarding this funding or general COVID-19-related feedback, please [get in touch](#).

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## Teaching & Non-Teaching Vacancies

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GBA provides a free advertising service for our Member Schools. Job vacancies are posted on our website and Twitter page. There is also a link to our job listings on the Education Authority website in the job opportunities section.

If you would like us to host a vacancy for your school, please [contact us](#), you can use this [template](#) to provide us with the necessary information about the post(s). Please allow **one working day** for posts to be uploaded.



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